

ANNUAL REPORT

dental health



ORAL HEALTH IS A QUALITY-OF-LIFE ISSUE

Good management of a child's dental health is a marker for good management of the child's overall health. Having high self-esteem, the ability to eat and speak comfortably and a pleasant smile all depend on good oral health care.

WHAT ARE THE HIDDEN FACTS?

Dental decay is the most common infectious disease of U.S. children. More than half of all children ages 6 through 8 and two-thirds of all 15-year-old adolescents continue to experience dental decay.

Eighty percent of the dental caries found in children are concentrated in 25 percent of children ages 5 through 17. Higher disease levels are generally found among racial and ethnic minority groups, children from low-income families and children whose parents have less than a high school education.

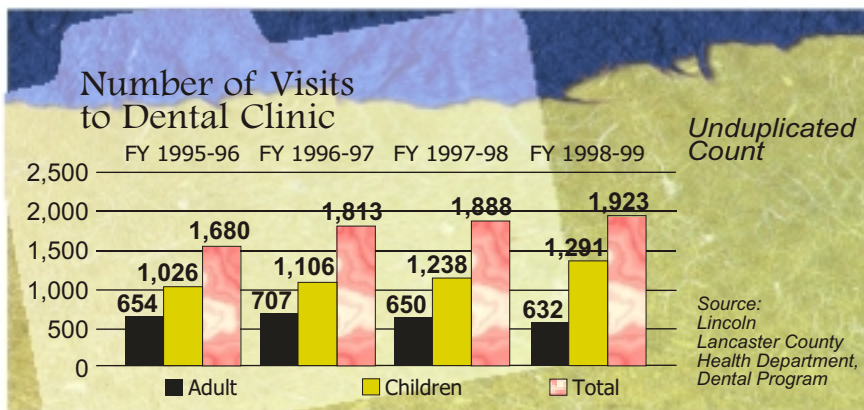
Nearly one-third of the cavities in children ages 6 through 8 have not been repaired.

REDUCING HEALTH DISPARITIES:

In working toward reducing unmet needs and disparities in oral health care, the Dental Division provided 5,126 clinical visits to 1,923 clients. Of these clients served, 1,291 were children of low-income families and 747 clients of racial and ethnic minorities.

Accomplishments of the program include 4,540 children screened, 2,003 children referred and 240 children identified as needing priority dental care.

To address the needs of children, the Dental Clinic provided school visits using the mobile health clinic and transportation to



OUTREACH TO CHILDREN THROUGH SCHOOLS:

Individuals with the highest prevalence of oral disease often have the most difficulty gaining access to the dental care system.

Access for children to dental health care is accomplished by the Dental Health Division through our school systems. In partnership with the Lincoln Public Schools, the Dental Division coordinates a school-based dental screening and referral program. The program utilizes dentists from the community and targets children that have not seen a dentist in the past 12 months.

the dental clinic for children from Elliott, McPhee, Everett, Prescott and Calvert schools. The mobile health clinic also made site visits to St. Mary's School, the Salvation Army, the Malone Center and the Northeast Family Resource Center targeting high-risk children. Nearly 170 dental visits or appointments were provided to address the needs of these children.



In cooperation with the Lincoln Action Program and Lincoln Public Schools, the Dental Division provided in-kind services to 42 high-risk children from the Headstart program. The monetary equivalent of our dental services is used as "match" for Headstart federal funding.

Fluoride has long been recognized as the most reliable and cost-effective method to prevent tooth decay. The Dental Division has worked with rural schools and parent organizations to implement a school-based fluoride rinse program targeting children in kindergarten through the sixth grade living in areas with fluoride deficient drinking water. Children rinsing once a week with a .2 percent concentrate fluoride solution have a 20 to 50 percent reduction in the incidence of tooth decay. Nine rural schools participated and nearly 700 children were reached.

To increase the awareness of the importance of dental health and early detection of dental disease, the Dental Health Division offers presentations on dental health topics that include oral hygiene, smokeless tobacco, nutrition and oral pathology. The Dental Division gave 35 presentations to 2,816 children and adults.



OUTREACH OF ADULTS THROUGH COMMUNITY BASED INITIATIVES:

Gingivitis and periodontal disease affect nearly half of all employed Americans between ages 18 and 64 and more than 50 percent of older adults between ages 65 and 74.

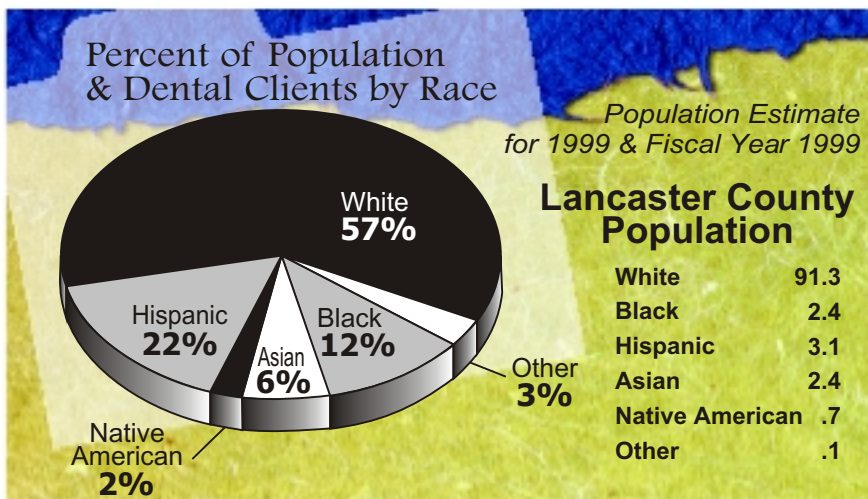
While more than 43 million Americans lack medical insurance, there are over 150 million Americans with limited or no dental insurance.

Lack of dental insurance affects dental utilization and oral health status. Forty-eight percent of people without private dental insurance did not have a dental visit in the last year, compared to 28 percent with insurance.

Twenty-seven percent of persons over 65 without dental insurance had no teeth at all, compared to 18.3 percent with dental insurance.

Compared to the general population, fewer members of

Social Services and the General Assistance Program, these clients received dental services free or at a reduced cost. The mobile health clinic was used at several sites (Malone Center, Salvation Army, People's City Mission) to reach underserved high-risk population groups and neighborhoods. The services provided through this collaboration maximize resources, minimize costs to the county and provide clients with the basic needs that help promote employability.



racial and ethnic minority groups and fewer poor adults have seen a dentist in the last year.

To facilitate access to care for low-income adults, racial and ethnic minority groups and the elderly, the Dental Division provided screenings and referral to 324 clients. Through cooperation with the UNMC College of Dentistry, the Department of

